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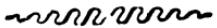
A REPLY TO Dr. A. A. MACDONELL

BY

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SANSKRIT STUDIES IN INDIA.

The Lancashire mill-owner pities the overworked Indian mill-hand. Others of his tribe pity the lascar for the various discomforts he has to suffer on board the ship. It is now the turn of a scholar to pity the Hindu population of India in general and Hindu students in particular. Dr. A. A. Macdonell, the present Boden Professor of Sanskrit, Oxford, has felt for them and given expression to his feelings in a communication, published in the issue of the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society for July 1906, on "the Study of Sanskrit as an Imperial Question." If the civilians appointed to "Provinces of which the vernaculars are peculiarly Sanskritic" were to be compelled to learn Sanskrit before they left for India and—may I not add?—to swell the numbers of Dr. Macdonell's pupils, their relations to the people of India would be more sympathetic and they would "greatly strengthen the position of the British Rāj." If European scholars were not to be excluded from the chairs of Sanskrit in India, "Sanskrit literature, the best inheritance of the Hindus,...might be made the chief instrument in their intellectual and social regeneration." But both these things are being shamefully neglected by the British Government, believes Dr. Macdonell. His treatment of his thesis bristles with misstatements and is throughout pervaded by a spirit of injustice and of a want of sympathy. He has set aside the "strict critical methods of research," which he professes to value so much, and has to some extent dealt with his subject in the manner of the German, who, in the well-known story, sat in his room and drew upon his imagination for an account of the camel. Writings such as his it is that so far from doing the good they avow cause not a little irritation and leave their sting behind.

None can deny the great importance Dr. Macdonell attaches to a knowledge of Sanskrit on the part of members of the Indian Civil Service—though by the bye there are not wanting instances of Civilian Sanskritists being among those most unsympathetic towards the people of India—or to the educational value of Sanskrit. There is further very little to object to in what he says on the first head. But he soon plunges

into matters where one feels compelled to join issue with him.

On the question of Civilians first beginning their study of Sanskrit in India he says :—“ In any case, his knowledge, acquired with the assistance of an uncritical Pandit, would not be of much value. It would probably express itself in philological discoveries such as identifying the Sanskrit word *as̄va*, ‘horse,’ with the English *ass* ; or deriving the Sanskrit *vānara*, ‘monkey,’ from *vā nara*, ‘or a man’.” The footnotes are :—“ 1 An Indian Civilian, who had evolved his own philology in the East, once actually mentioned this to me as an interesting linguistic equation. 2 This is a native etymology of the word.” To take the latter first, this laugh at the expense of native etymology ill becomes one who remembers the state of philology in Plato’s time. Of the former the full implication did not, it seems, dawn upon the critical mind of Dr. Macdonell. Elsewhere he says : “ In Sanskrit the educationalist has ready to hand a subject which, if properly handled, would be at least equal to Latin or Greek as an agency for developing the mental faculties.” Presumably the new Civilians are mostly graduates of British Universities and have been taught Latin and Greek. And yet Dr. Macdonell is afraid that their knowledge acquired with the assistance of an uncritical Pandit would be valueless and would probably express itself in absurd philological discoveries. His fear is tantamount to an acknowledgment that in spite of their study of Latin and Greek at a British University they have not succeeded in acquiring that grasp of scientific principles which ought to preserve them from such absurdities. He ought, therefore, first to move to get the subjects of Latin and Greek “ properly handled ” at British Universities. Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar, whom he credits with a real grasp of scientific method, has been in the habit of saying that he acquired that grasp from his college education in general and his European Professors and teachers in subjects other than Sanskrit, for there was no Professor of Sanskrit in his college days. And if unlike him other native Sanskritists have not acquired that grasp, the imported European Professors in subjects other than Sanskrit must also come in for their share of blame.

One of the advantages of a study of Sanskrit to a Civilian, which Dr. Macdonell mentions, is, that “ it will enable him to

consult the Sanskrit legal works which are the sources of Hindu law, without having to rely on the uncritical interpretations of a possibly third-rate Pandit." Vain is the hope. 'A previous knowledge of Sanskrit such as is had in Europe can hardly ever dispense with the necessity, in the case of even European Professors of Sanskrit, of reading Sanskrit legal works with a Pandit, as some evidence I shall quote later on will show. Here I shall content myself with quoting Dr. Peterson's evidence in favour of these much maligned Pandits.

"During the year under report," he says in his Report on the Search for Sanskrit Manuscripts for 1883-4 (p. 89), "the Agent to the Search, Mr. Bhagvandas Kevaldas, and the Shastri, Mr. Ramchandra, continued to give efficient assistance. It would be impossible to speak too highly of the disinterested zeal and the intelligence with which Mr. Bhagvandas urges on the work; while Mr. Ramchandra's extensive acquaintance with Jain literature renders him a valuable assistant in a part of the task that has special difficulties. I owe much also, as in the previous year, to my friend Pandit Durgaprasada of Jeypore, with whom I have been in constant communication while writing this Report, as well as during my visits to Alwar and Jeypore."

In his Report for 1882-3 (p. 4) speaking of the Report of one of his predecessors he says:—"I have before me now a Report, which is to my mind chiefly remarkable from the fact that, neither on the covers, nor anywhere within the covers, does the European scholar, whose name appears on the title-page, give that of the native who, unaided, and after great exertions, procured for Government the valuable collection of palm-leaf MSS. so complacently exhibited, or make any reference at all to the other native collaborator without whose special knowledge of Mâgadhi, and the Jain literature, that part of the Report, I make bold to say, could not have been written. Such a proceeding—and it does not, I regret to think, stand alone—may tend to confirm the relative estimate of native and European learning; but it is at the expense, I submit, of something more valuable than even a character for learning."

Another point to be noticed here is, that when the importance of Sanskrit is to be magnified, Dr. Macdonell writes in

such magniloquent strains as these : "Thousands of Brahmins still speak it, and in some centres like Benares they wield it, in disputations lasting for hours, with a mastery which could hardly be surpassed in any living language". And yet it is possibly only a third-rate Pandit, that, according to him, will be available to a civilian to read with.

From what he says with regard to the other main division of his subject, it will be necessary here to give a long extract. "It is", he says, "a most unfortunate thing that the excessive use of examinations, prevalent in England, should have been adopted in a country where the memory has for ages been abnormally developed to the detriment of the reasoning powers. Memory continues to be the faculty mainly relied on by the Sanskrit student; but the redeeming feature of the native system, single-minded devotion to the subject for its own sake, is replaced by feverish eagerness for the attainment of a degree, through examinations which must be passed by hook or by crook. A certain number of prescribed books has to be got up in a mechanical way, often with the aid of very inadequate editions. A glance at the calendars of the Indian Universities will suffice to show that the set books in Sanskrit are by no means always judiciously selected. A number of books may, for instance, be found prescribed from a single department of literature, in which the same kind of subject-matter is treated over and over again. In the regulations, books may be seen recommended which are quite out of date, and the use of which must therefore necessarily do more harm than good. This state of things is doubtless largely due to the fact that no Director of Public Instruction ever knows any Sanskrit nowadays, while the native professors, whose advice is accepted, are not qualified to construct a systematic and adequate curriculum based on broad principles. Such haphazard and one-sided schemes cannot possibly produce educationally satisfactory results. Matters are aggravated by the 'cram' character of the papers to which a native examiner is particularly prone. One can hardly help feeling that to such circumstances is partly due the amazing ingenuity which is often employed by Indian students in their endeavours to secure advance copies of examination papers, and which has rendered the printing of the latter in Europe an advisable precaution. A good many people have probably heard of the white-robed compositor of Calcutta who, having sat down, when no one was looking, on the type he had set,

up, sold the impression thus obtained to aspirants for University Honours."

Dr. Macdonell herein confines his attention only to Sanskrit and the present-day Sanskrit student of Indian Universities, because, he would probably say, they are his theme and he is not concerned in any way with the other languages and subjects and the other students. But it is absolutely necessary in the present case that he should not do so, that he might thus guard himself against unwarranted inferences. Speaking of Bombay, there are many other subjects that have to be got up for all the different examinations held by the University and the number of students taking up Sanskrit as their classical language at the various Arts examinations instead of some other language is only a little over one half. At the Panjab University the number of students selecting Sanskrit is a very small minority. Among such a large variety of subjects there is hardly any difference observable, by men on the spot, as regards the way in which Sanskrit is studied and the way in which other subjects, even when taught by Professors from European Universities, are studied and as regards the eagerness for securing advance copies of question papers. Nor is there any difference on these two points between the Sanskrit students of to-day and those of the day when there were more European Professors of Sanskrit in India. The Indian Universities have had their character stamped on them by men on the spot (including European Professors of Sanskrit and other subjects) and at least as qualified for the purpose as Dr. Macdonell. After a long experience of the three older Universities the two more recent ones, the Panjab and Allahabad Universities, were brought into being and Lord Curzon has tried to reform them all. All these, therefore, it is to be presumed, must be the best possible *under the circumstances*, though they may not at all be perfect of their kind. Sanskrit studies are a part of this whole system and the importation of European Professors of Sanskrit cannot affect them in the least in the respects under consideration, *as it has not done in the past.*

The passage extracted is moreover a tangled web of incorrect statements, as will be at once discovered by any one familiar in the least degree with the working of Indian

Universities. No Director of Public Instruction, as such, has ever had anything whatsoever to do with Sanskrit or any other studies at the Universities. They are prescribed by the Senates, by Boards of Studies appointed by the Universities, or by the Syndicate on the recommendation of special committees appointed when required. On the Committees or Boards are placed Professors in the subjects concerned from some of the affiliated Colleges and the opinions of the Professors at the other Colleges are asked for. The courses of studies in Sanskrit then are such as are approved of by the Professors themselves. In Bombay the present courses of studies in Sanskrit do not in the least differ from what they were in the time of the European Professors of Sanskrit. Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar's is still the guiding hand. At Allahabad Drs. Thibaut, Venis and Ewing are on the University Board of Studies, in the Panjab Mr. Woolner and Dr. H. Griswold and at Madras Drs. Hultzsch and M. Phillips. Among examiners at the Panjab University there have been Drs. Führer, Thibaut and Venis. In thinking that the Directors of Public Instruction had anything to do with these studies Dr. Macdonell must have, I believe, been misled by the designation of those officers.

The Bombay course is as varied as it practically can be. Up to the B.A., it includes generally a play of Kālidāsa and a play by some other author, a portion of a Kāvya, a portion of a prose book (such as Kādambarī), elements of Nyāya (as in Tarkasaṅgraha), a selection of hymns from the Rigveda and a portion of the Kāvyaprakāśa (Alamkāra literature); and in the case of some students the following also: a portion of Śāṅkarāchārya's Sārirakabhāṣya or Rāmānuja's Sribhāṣya, Gītā or a portion of the Upanishads, and Dr. Macdonell's own history of Sanskrit Literature. And if the course has remained as varied as it is, it is in spite of some of the European professors, who have again and again tried to throw out the elements of Nyāya, the Kāvyaprakāśa and the Vedāntasūtrabhāṣya, as being no part of literature proper, forgetful of the fact that by parity of reasoning Plato and Aristotle would have to be eschewed from a course in Greek literature at English Universities. The true reason, however, was that they were unable to teach such works as the Kāvyaprakāśa and Tarkasaṅgraha. Even the Panjab University under the advice, I believe, of Dr. Stein adopted the Bombay course some years ago. So that the above-

quoted remarks of Dr. Macdonell have no basis in fact and are the work of his fertile imagination, especially as regards the University of Bombay.

As regards the character of the question papers, if there has been a change at all, it has been for the better. The questions in Tarkasamgraha, &c., used to be of a "cram character", when the papers were set by European professors. They have ceased to be so any longer.

"The labours," Dr. Macdonell goes on to say, "of such men (Drs. Bühler and Kielhorn) did an immense deal to stimulate and place on a scientific basis the study of Sanskrit grammar, palæography, epigraphy and archæology in India." Among whom did they do so? Among their pupils or other Indian scholars? Dr. Macdonell himself denies that, when he says that "men who have grown up under the English educational system...have yet not acquired...any real grasp of scientific method." Here I shall quote two most pertinent passages from a letter of the late Mr. Justice Telang published in the Times of India of 22nd Octotter 1881. They deal with this point as well as another noticed previously.

"And I beg to state at the very outset my deliberate opinion, formed from a personal knowledge of the instruction imparted by both Drs. Bühler and Kielhorn in our colleges, that the claim made by you (the editor of the Times of India) on their behalf and on behalf of Dr. Haug is a grossly extravagant and exaggerated one, and one which those scholars themselves would unhesitatingly repudiate. Coming to particulars, it is first to be noted that Dr. Bühler applied himself especially to the study of the Dharmia Shastra, Dr. Kielhorn to that of the Vyakarana Shastra, and Dr. Haug, I believe, to no shastra at all, but he worked mainly at the Aitareya Brahmana. Now, none of these topics has ever formed the subject of regular instruction in our colleges. On what, then, is the claim made on behalf of the three learned doctors to be based? Is it because Dr. Bühler taught a few pages of the S'âkuntala, or Dr. Kielhorn a few pages of the Daśakumâracharita to their students, that all native scholars are to be spoken of in the cavalier way in which you have thought fit to speak of them? Sanskrit literature, apart from the Vedas, may be roughly divided into the philosophic

and scientific portion on the one side, and the poetical and dramatic on the other. As to the latter, I make bold to say, that in the understanding and appreciation of it native scholars can derive almost no help from European scholars. The various translations which have been made by Europeans of our dramas—of the *Viracharita*, for instance, or the *Vikramorvashi*, among others—show how much Europeans have yet to learn from natives as regards the appreciation of our classical literature. As to the former class, I challenge any European, who has not himself studied, say, the *Vedanta-Bhashya* or the *Siddhânta Muktâvali*, or even the *Kaumudi*, under a native *Shastri*, either to teach it satisfactorily to native students, or even to stand an examination in it himself. In truth, it is notorious that the ‘Eminent Orientalists’ you refer to themselves learnt the greater and more important portion of what they know of Sanskrit in our country and under our scholars. Dr. Bühler knew nothing of *Dharma-Shastra* until he studied it with the late *Vinayaka Shastri* Divekar, and Dr. Kielhorn knew nothing of the *Vyakarana Shastra* until he learnt it under the late *Anant Shastri Pendharkar*.’

“ But this I do say, that for a real appreciation of our *Kalidasas* and *Bhavabhutis*, and for a real understanding of our *Nyaya* and *Vedanta* and *Vyakarana*, neither England nor Germany can suffice. You may learn the *Rigveda* in Europe or America; and I think, indeed, that a European or American scholar has a considerable advantage over us in that department of learning. But as regards our non-Vedic literature, we entirely deny the superiority claimed for, *not* by, our European brethren. And I would add this, too, that as regards our classical literature, the greatest purely European names must ‘pale their ineffectual fires’ before those of the scholars who have studied Sanskrit under our old *Shastris*. Who, I ask, is there in Europe or America who knows the *Dharma Shastra* as well as Dr. Bühler or the *Vyakarana Shastra* as well as Dr. Kielhorn?”

On the *unimpeachability* of the evidence of the late Justice Telang, on a matter of fact at any rate, I can confidently appeal to Sir Raymond West and Lord Reay, who were both, I see, present at the last anniversary meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society, where also the subject of Dr. Macdonell’s communication came up for discussion.

As regards Dr. Peterson, in an inspired para. in the same issue of the Times of India it was stated that "the chances are that the students of either of these four gentlemen (Bühler, Kielhorn, A. Weber and Stenzler) would make a far better Professor than any English student who has had Prof. Monier Williams for his teacher," the reference in the last clause being evidently to Dr. Peterson. Of my own personal knowledge I can say, that nothing better can be said of him than has been said in the above extracts of the other European Professors of Sanskrit who preceded him. The only difference is that he had often the frankness to acknowledge to his pupils that sometimes it was rather they who taught him and not he them.

And as to palæography, epigraphy and archaeology, Dr. Kielhorn knew nothing about these while in India, though, of course, he has done a great deal of very useful work since he returned to Germany; and Dr. Bühler turned his attention to them after he left his Professorship in the Elphinstone College. The late Dr. Bhau Daji was the first who did valuable work in these branches. He began it before Dr. Bühler came out to India and continued it uninfluenced by him in any way, since Dr. Bühler had not yet begun his study of the subjects. He was followed by Dr. Bhagvanlal Indraji and Dr. Bhandarkar, and it was some time after the latter had been working in the field that Dr. Bühler turned his attention to it. These are matters of history and yet those native scholars have not been so much as even remotely alluded to by Dr. Macdonell and the credit of stimulating and placing on a scientific basis the study of these subjects in India has been given to the two European Scholars, one of whom was a perfect stranger to them while in India.

Next Dr. Macdonell goes on to cite what he considers two glaring instances of want of "real grasp of scientific method." This is what he tells us of them: "A native scholar of some distinction wished to edit a certain text in a well-known Sanskrit series, one of the rules for which forbade the publication in it of any edition unless based on at least three independent MSS. The scholar in question possessed only one MS. of the work. This, however, proved no insuperable difficulty. He handed his solitary MS. to his copyists, 'and then there were three.' The resulting edition probably contained quite an array of various readings,

supplied by the mistakes of the scribes, and doubtless presented a thoroughly critical appearance. More recently another native Sanskrit scholar has published a work in which he claims to have conclusively proved, on the strength of some vague astrological statements in the *Mahābhārata*, the exact date (October 31st, 1194 B.C.) when the great war described in that epic began."

The learned doctor is used to dealing in myths and legends, and knows what wonderful transformations they undergo. In a passage previously extracted he speaks of a "white-robed" compositor. Had the compositor done what he is credited with, he would in all human probability have been immediately detected and he would, therefore, not have run the risk. As I read the story in a newspaper many years ago it was a "white"-skinned compositor who sat down upon the type with his robes off. In the first of the present cases the word "probably" shows that Dr. Macdonell has not himself seen the edition. And I deny the correctness of the inference drawn, should the edition be a reality. In the first place, since it is not impossible that only one or two MSS. of a work might be available and that further even an imperfect edition based on the solitary or the two MSS. would be of great use, it might be foolish to make the rule referred to, but it would certainly not show want of grasp of scientific method. Again, if the editor or the framers of the rule believed that by the process referred to "independent" MSS. were brought into being, they would be fitter inmates of the lunatic asylum than of the world outside. If the editor did practise the trick without the knowledge of the framers of the rule, which, however, I doubt, it was a downright fraud and nothing more. I would advise Dr. Macdonell to take up this myth for his next critical investigation and try to find out the natural phenomenon on which it is based. I am almost sure he will find that the story was a joke aimed at critical editors collating MSS. As regards the other case, it would not be difficult to match it with equally absurd propositions of even the most eminent scholars, who have got the proper critical spirit when they have to deal with classical, Indian and other mythologies, but who are entirely forsaken by that spirit when they come to deal with Biblical criticism. Need I also remind Dr. Macdonell of Colonel Ellis putting faith in a forged grant (which purported to be made by Janamejaya of *Mahābhārata* fame on a day corresponding to

7th April 1521 A.D.) and asking scholars out here to look out for the ruins of the palace of Sarvadamana or Bharata, the burnt remains of Janamejaya's As'vamedha sacrifice &c., &c. ? But on this point I shall treat Dr. Macdonell later on to a few more choice examples, picked out at random, of editing, interpretation &c., &c., by European scholars.

In the meanwhile I shall proceed to other points in the communication I am discussing. "Native scholars," says the Doctor a little further on, "can no longer obtain any training in this direction (i.e. of a grasp of scientific method). The lack of the knowledge of German, moreover, cuts them off from most of such guidance as can be derived from the private study of standard works of scholarship." Now I do not in the least wish to deny the great importance of a knowledge of German to an oriental scholar. I may, however, mention in passing that Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar knew hardly any German before 1887 and yet most of the literary work on account of which Dr. Macdonell regards him as a rare exception was done before that year. But what is of greater importance is, that in making the statement Dr. Macdonell is, so far at least as the present Government professors of Sanskrit in Bombay are concerned, not quite correct and has written without due enquiry. Professor K. B. Pathak, my colleague, can, I believe, read German and I too can read it a little, though not as satisfactorily as I should wish.

Here are a few more remarks of Dr. Macdonell :—"The exclusion of European scholars from the chairs of Sanskrit in India is likely to react in a prejudicial way on Sanskrit studies in England also." "The prospect of a career for English Sanskritists in India being practically closed, the professors in our Universities must naturally have some hesitation in encouraging students to become specialists in Sanskrit, for the openings for such scholars in this country itself are very rare." "A supply of suitable men is, however, not likely to be forthcoming, unless vacancies can be counted upon to occur at definite periods. If the professors in our Universities could be informed of such appointments a sufficiently long time before, they could easily train an able man for the particular post, supplementing their own teaching by sending him to a German University for a time."

All this sounds very funny indeed. One of the reasons, then, for which Dr. Macdonell wants Europeans to be appointed to chairs of Sanskrit in India is that the study of Sanskrit may be encouraged thereby in England. But, so far as Bombay is concerned, I do not see how the exclusion can affect Sanskrit studies in England in the way mentioned, since before the exclusion appointments in Bombay were not to any great extent calculated to encourage them. Up to the end of 1881 there were in all four appointments made and of them so many as three had been given to Germans, and the fifth Professor who was on the point of starting for India in 1881-2 was also a German. And so was another scholar who was proposed to be appointed in 1899 on Dr. Peterson's death.

The farrant, moreover, is so persistently dinned into the ears of native students that their interest in their studies extends only to their pecuniary value in the shape of Government service. And yet in such a country as England, where, if at all, one would expect disinterested love for all studies, including that of Sanskrit, Dr. Macdonell acknowledges without a blush the influence of an interested motive at English Universities also. And if even in such a country as England properly trained scholars are to be had only if appointments are guaranteed, surely it is absurd for Dr. Macdonell to expect matters to be otherwise in India. If appointments were to be guaranteed to native scholars, they also would be found to equip themselves properly as scholars, as numbers of natives of India are qualifying themselves for the Indian Civil and Medical Services, for the Cambridge Mathematical Tripos, &c, &c. But what encouragement foresooth have they had up to now? Dr. R. G. Bandarkar was passed over in 1873, though he had acted as professor for four years, and Dr. Peterson was brought to fill up the permanent place; and even in 1882 after Dr. Kielhorn's retirement, he had to try very hard that he might not be passed over again. And when he did succeed at last, he was virtually being made to suffer pecuniarily, so much so, that he even asked to be sent back to his old place to play second-fiddle as before to a European scholar of admittedly far lower qualifications; and he would have been allowed to have his wish but for the fact that his old place had been abolished and the salary irrevocably utilized for other purposes. Even now though European scholars have been excluded from the chairs of Sanskrit, that does not

necessarily mean that encouragement has been given to native scholars to qualify and train themselves in the proper way. According to the rules relating to the branch of service in which the professorships are now included it would hardly ever be worth their while and trouble and the necessary expense, to try to do so.

Having contested the positions of Dr. Macdonell so far and intending immediately to give samples of absurdities of European Sanskritists I am bound to confess that far too many of our present native scholars are sadly lacking in the historical and critical spirit. It is, however, the patriotic bias that often influences them, as does the religious bias influence Greek, Latin and Biblical scholars in England. Dr. Macdonell must remember what a fierce agitation in England followed the publication, about forty years ago, of the "Essays and Reviews," in which a faint attempt was made to apply the critical and scientific method to the study of the Bible and of religious questions. Moreover there is hardly a single branch of Indian literature (not excluding even the most obscene one) which some European Scholar or other, at some time or other, has not exercised his ingenuity upon proving to be more or less completely indebted to Greek or some other foreign influence. This is certainly not calculated to moderate the patriotic bias. There is further no such encouragement to do better as, according to Dr. Macdonell's own statement, even English scholars of Sanskrit stand in need of. But we can rely upon native scholars at least for one thing, for the correct interpretation on the whole of all branches of Indian literature except the Mantra portion of Vedic literature. We cannot do that in the case of a European scholar. And as to the critical spirit our past experience does not warrant us in expecting the pupils of European Professors of Sanskrit to acquire it from them, even if they themselves should be possessed of it, so long as other things are as they are. Another point I wish to insist upon is that the work of European scholars even is after all not as unimpeachably critical and scientific as Dr. Macdonnell would have people believe.

Now for the instances in addition to the one, already mentioned, of Colonel Ellis.

Dr. Oppert is a German scholar and so is Dr. Haberland. Yet this is what Dr. Aufrecht says of catalogues of MSS.

published by Dr. Oppert: "No German should have lent his name to such bad workmanship." The extraordinary short-comings of Dr. Haberlandt's edition of the Southern version of the Pañchatantra have been exposed by J. Hertel in vol. 58 of the Journal, German Oriental Society.

Stenzler, Wilson, Regnaud and Böhtlingk were European scholars and with reference to them Dr. Ryder in his preface to his translation of the Mṛichchhakatīka (Harv. Or. Ser.) says: "Parab's edition is the most recent and its editor is a most admirable Sanskrit scholar, who, it seems to me, has in several places understood the real meaning of the text better than his predecessors," among whom were the just mentioned Stenzler, Wilson, Regnaud and Böhtlingk.

Hopkins is an American scholar, presumably a careful, scientific observer and investigator, and he has been to India. He mentions Dadabhai Naoroji by name and quotes him, taking him to be a Hindu (India Old and New, pp. 334-5).

Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar began his career as a scholar in 1864 by publishing in "Native Opinion" criticism on Dr. Haug's edition and translation of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and Dr. Goldstucker's Pāṇini. In the former he pointed out innumerable bad mistakes and the whole article was extracted and placed by Prof. Weber at the head of his own criticism on the work in the Indische Studien. In the latter he brought to light Goldstucker's misinterpretation of passages in the Mahābhāṣya on which he based recondite historical theories. The Mahābhāṣya was such a sealed book in Europe for a long time that nobody was able to judge whether Dr. Bhandarkar's criticism was just; and it was only twelve years after, when Dr. Kielhorn had studied portions of the work under Dr. Macdonell's uncritical Pandits, that he perceived the worth of his criticism of Goldstucker's Pāṇini and suggested its republication in the Indian Antiquary.

Dr. Haug while at Poona was appointed President of the Dakshina Prize Committee, which gave rewards to authors of new Marathi works and translations. On one occasion a Marathi translation of the Ratnāvalī was submitted to the committee by a Nasik Pandit and it had to be examined and its fitness for a prize to be determined. It was sent to Dr. Haug, who declared that the Shastri's translation of the

passage beginning राज्यं निर्जितस्तु at the very commencement of Ratnāvalli was erroneous. The true sense of the passage is that the hero felicitates himself on all things combining for his delight. Among these he mentions his queen, the daughter of Pradyota, and the season of spring (प्रसौतस्य दुता कसन्तसमयः). Dr. Hang declaring this translation wrong translated the words by "spring is the daughter of light." Not to speak of the irrelevancy of such an idea in the passage, Dr. Hang showed himself completely ignorant of the fact that a Sanskrit poet would never represent as a female a person or personified thing, which in the same breath is expressed by a masculine noun. Prof. Bain of Deccan College, Poona, however, shows himself to be fully aware of this fact, when in the preface to his "Digit of the Moon" he says: "In Sanskrit, the moon like the sun, is a male. Hindoo poets get over this difficulty when they want a female moon, by personifying his attributes, or making a part do duty for the whole". Prof. Bain, I believe, studied Sanskrit with an uncritical Pandit out here in India.

The same fact is ignored by Monier Williams, Dr. Macdonell's predecessor in the chair of the Boden Professor, in his explanation of किमन् द्वितीये यदि विशाले सशाङ्कलेखामदुवर्तते (S'āk., his 2nd edition, p. 113). He could not see the absurdity of the idea of Kālidāsa ever thinking of purposely going out of his way to turn the moon into a female, though it was a man who was to be compared to the moon. The passage, he says, means: "If the constellation Viśākhā is eager for a union with the moon why need we wonder at S'akuntalā's desire to be united with a prince of the Lunar race?...Dushyanta probably means to compare himself to the moon and S'akuntalā to Viśākhā." That further implies that the hero Dushyanta believes that he was a person whom S'akuntalā *must* naturally love on account of his lineage. I wonder what *karman* it was that fated Kālidāsa to be handed down to posterity by a Boden Professor as so utterly ignorant of a lover's heart. Moreover just as the Professor has neglected the gender and made the masculine Dushyanta answer to the feminine S'āśāṅkalekhā, he has also neglected the dual of Viśākhā and identified the two stars with S'akuntalā. Viśākha stands of course for the two friends and S'āśāṅkalekhā for S'akuntalā.

Further on in the same act there are four successive speeches of S'akuntalā and her friends beginning प्रियवदा । विचिन्त्य ।

हला । परमपर्वते (pp. 115-6). I shall here quote Monier Williams's own translations and explanations. Pri.—“Let a love-letter be composed for him. Having hidden it in a flower, I will deliver it into his hand under the pretext of the remains (of an offering presented to an idol.) ” Anasūyā says she likes the plan but asks Śakuntalā what she thinks of it. Śak.—“This very injunction [suggestion] of my friend is weighed (in my mind) i. e. I must consider before I can consent to it.” Pri.—“Therefore just think of some pretty composition in verse accompanied by an allusion to yourself.” In the first place विष्णवीभिदि can never mean “is weighed.” It means “is questioned.” But even if it could ever mean that, a little reflection ought to have shown Monier Williams that he was perfectly wrong here. The last words of Priyamvadā evidently imply that Śakuntalā has consented to the plan and the latter's words must consequently be interpreted accordingly, which is done by taking them as a question of appeal. This error is due not to want of such knowledge of Sanskrit as an uncritical Pandit or native scholar may easily surpass a European scholar in. It is due to the neglect of the exercise of the ordinary critical faculty, in the possession and exercise of which a critical scholar ought to be superior to an uncritical one. The error can be detected from even the translations by a boy of ordinary intelligence totally ignorant of Sanskrit. The more intelligent of the Sanskrit students of this year's Freshmen's class at Elphinstone College, crammers as Dr. Macdonell would call them all, detected the error and corrected it.

Another absurdity of Monier Williams may also be cited viz , his explanation of पतिदेवता as “the idol of (her) husband” in the passage कः पतिदेवतामन्यः परिमाहुसुत्सहेत (p. 241). Such an idea is foreign to Indian literature. Similar compounds, such as पितृदेव, आवायदेव, show that पतिदेवता must be taken to mean “One to whom her husband is her god.” Such women are credited with the power of defying any one to defile them with his contaminating touch and here पतिदेवता is an adjective intended to imply such a power in Śakuntalā. At the time referred to in the passage she was far from being पतिदेवता in Monier Williams's sense of that word. Dushyanta had repudiated her in the harshest way possible and would not have moved a finger to help her then, at least

* सहीनिओओवि विक्षण्पविदि ।

as her husband, as he had completely forgotten that he was so related to her. This last point again was at once perceived by some of this year's freshmen at Elphinstone College.

Now, we come to a far greater name, which has resounded through the three worlds, that of Prof. Max Müller, who, if I am rightly informed, was Dr. Macdonell's teacher and a Professor of Vedic literature equal to whom Oxford, I believe, some years ago, could nowhere find. How uncritically his translations of the Upanishads in the Sacred Books of the East have been done has been shown by Whitney in Vol. VII of the American Journal of Philology. I shall here notice one or two points not mentioned by him. The initial critical error that Max Müller and some of the other European scholars commit is to take Śāṅkarāchārya as the authoritative exponent of the Upanishads, to call him *the* commentator, and totally ignore the others, e. g. Raṅgārāmānuja, a follower of Rāmānuja. Now there is the word वाल्य in वर्ल्येन तिष्ठते तः वाल्यं च पाण्डित्यं च निर्विद्य (Brih. Up. III 5). Śāṅkara gives a very forced explanation of it and Max Müller accepts it. Gough and Böhtlingk take it in the usual sense. Max Müller rejects it on the ground that he doubts "whether 'the knowledge of babes' is not a Christian rather than an Indian idea." But if he had looked into Raṅgārāmānuja he would have found that the latter explains the word by स्वमाहात्म्यमाविष्कारणलक्षणवालस्यभावेन, which shows that the idea of one's becoming like a child is not a distinctively Christian idea. In his note on अङ्गाराबद्धयण he has misunderstood the commentator, when he says that the commentator explains it "as a vessel in which coals are extinguished." The commentator explains it simply by अङ्गारा अवक्षीयन्ते यस्मिन् संदंशादौ and Max Müller himself says that *kshi* with *ava* means to remove, to take away. Another instance is Max Müller's note on अथ ह याज्ञवल्क्यः स्वर्मेव ब्रह्मचारिण्युवाचैताः सोम्योदजं सामश्वारेऽहति ता होदाचकार । (III. i. 2). Max Müller takes सामश्वारेऽहति as an epithet by which Yājñavalkya's pupil addresses Yājñavalkya and thinks that "the commentator" agrees with him. But he has altogether misunderstood the commentator here, who takes it as an epithet of the pupil. And as Max Müller takes सामश्वारेऽहति (voc.) to apply to Yājñavalkya, he clearly proves that after all his life-long study of Indian literature he did not understand the exact relationship between an आचार्य and his आचार्यिन्, since he thought it likely that a pupil would address his Achārya in that way. Then again what sense suited to the

context would that sole word in the vocative signify? And what further has "but" got to do in the first sentence: "One expects iti after *udaga*, but *Sāmaśravas* is applied to *Yajñavalkya*, and not to the pupil?" The sentence beginning with "but" implies that *Yajñavalkya*'s words end with *udaga*. So far then from the fact stated in that sentence being opposed to the presence of *तुति* after उदज, it on the contrary shows *तुति* to be there necessary, if Max Müller's construction be correct.

In a much earlier work, the History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature, Max Müller shows at p. 197 (2nd Ed.) a complete misapprehension of the argument of a commentator, by which the latter seeks to make out the eternity of the Sūtra S'ākhās such as those bearing the names of *Āśvalāyana* and *Kātyāyana*. In each Kalpa or period of the existence of the Universe in which the whole creation is repeated exactly as in the previous Kalpa, there is a Rishi whose name a particular sūtra bears, such, for instance, as *Āśvalāyana*. Then there are as many individual *Āśvalāyanas* as the Kalpas. These individuals have a common nature *Jāti* which is *Āśvalāyanatva* and as (*Jāti*) according to the *Nyāya* philosophy is eternal, *Āśvalāyanatva* is eternal and therefore the name of the *Āśvalāyanas'ākhā* based upon that eternal *Jāti* is also eternal. Max Müller has made a thorough mess of the whole. He takes the word *Kalpa* here to mean *Kalpa sūtras* and neglects the most important word *Jāti*.

I had intended that these instances should be only such as had come under observation already and could be easily recollected on the spur of the moment, without any search whatsoever. Therefore I did not search for any in Dr. Macdonell's own works, though any such would have been much more pertinent. But Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar has obliged me with two picked from Dr Macdonell's edition and translation of the *Bṛihad-devatā* in the Harvard Oriental Series, which he came across on a cursory examination of them and of which I gladly make use here.

The mistakes of European scholars are generally due to their imperfect acquaintance with Indian ideas and the style of thought and expression of Indian writers. Opening Dr. Macdonell's translation of the *Brihaddevatā* at random and looking for something uncouth Dr. Bhandarkar found at pp. 180-1 :-

* “B 56. The king wishing to give his daughter to S'yāvāśva, said to his royal consort : ‘What is your opinion ? I (desire to) give the girl to S'yāvāśva.

“B 57. For a son of Atri would be no contemptible (*adurbala*) son-in-law for us.’ She on her part said to the king : ‘I have been born in a family of royal seers.’”

Now why should the king in recommending S'yāvāśva to his queen speak of him in a negative way as a person not bad instead of a person who is good ? This struck Dr. Bhandarkar as something not appropriate and led him to examine the matter more carefully, and he found that the reading of the MSS. was अत्रिपुत्रो दुर्बलः ‘the son of Atri is void of power.’ But Dr. Macdonell thinks the context requires अदुर्बलः and supposes that the अ after अ॒ो is elided according to the usual rule and puts in the mark of elision (5), though it does not occur in the MSS. The sense, however, is appropriate only without the अ and the absence of अ suits the context, while its presence does not, for “the son of Atri is weak or void of power” is to be taken as a remark of the queen and not of the king. Stanza 57 therefore should be translated :—“She on her part said to the king ‘the son Atri would be a powerless son-in-law for us, I have been born in a family of royal seers,’ &c. The presence of इति at the end of the first half of St. 57 seems to have misled Dr. Macdonell.

A few pages further on we have certainly a more serious error not creditable at all to Dr. Macdonell’s critical judgment. Dr. Macdonell translates, the first line of stanza 157, chapter V., thus :—“The Lord of Bay Steeds (Indra) then proclaimed to him (that he should receive) shares in Soma.” Now when the giving or receiving of shares in sacrificial offerings is spoken of in the Brāhmaṇa literature, it is always with reference to the deities worshipped and not with reference to men who are worshippers. When this impropriety struck Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar he looked into the notes and the original Sanskrit. But there the reading is सोमभागान्, which confirms the impropriety and does not help one out of it. Dr.

* Macdonell’ Edn. reads :—

दय(sic) वाश्याय मुती दिन्सूर् महिर्णी स्वा नृपोऽब्रवीत् ।

किं ते मतमहूं कन्या श्यावाश्याय ददामि हि ॥ १६ ॥

अत्रिपुत्रोऽदुर्बलो हि जापाता त्वावयोरिति ।

राजानमद्वीपीत्सापि नृपर्णिकुलजा श्वहम् ॥ ५७ ॥

नानृपिनीं तु जापाता तैष मन्त्रान् हि दृष्टवान् ।

Bhandarkar then looked into Rajendralal's edition and found in a footnote the reading स्तोमभागात् occurring in three of the MSS. collated by the editor. Now Dr. Macdonell did avail himself of Rajendralal's readings; for he says his edition is based on sixteen MSS., nine in his own possession and seven used by Rajendralal. Still the Doctor does not give the smallest indication of his having seen the reading स्तोमभागात्. But it is obvious that that alone is the correct reading. For, according to the story referred to by Śāṅkaka himself in the second line of st. 157 as substantiating what he has stated in the first, what Indra did was to teach Vasishtha the stomabhāgas* and not "proclaim to him that he should receive shares in Soma". And that alone is appropriate here, for the object is to give an account of how Vasishtha and after him his descendants came invariably to be made Brahmins in a sacrifice. And that account is, that a Brahman has to repeat certain formulas as a sort of an order to the Sāma-priests to sing their *stotras* in a sacrifice. These formulas are called Stomabhāgas because they are connected with the *stoma* or particular arrangement of the verses (Riks) composing a Sāman. The verses sung as so arranged form a stotra. And these formulas were taught to Vasishtha by Indra, and so he was made by him fit to be the Brahman at a sacrifice. Though the story was before Dr. Macdonell, he having given the reference, he did not carefully read it. The Bhāṣya on it of course did not deserve his attention, because it was written by an uncritical Pandit; and so the Doctor entirely misunderstood the passage. प्रोवाप् which he has translated by "proclaimed" means "taught" as he will easily see even if he refers to the St. Petersburg Wörterbuch. And certainly his not noticing the reading of Rajendralal's three MSS. throws a suspicion on the character of this edition based on sixteen MSS. inclusive of those three. And in this respect is his edition not open to one of the gravest charges brought against Dr. Haberlandt's edition of the Southern Pañchatantra? Or did he think that the omitted reading, which nevertheless is the correct one, was manufactured in the way of the mythical editor whose case he has cited and so ignore it altogether? If so, I hope he will now at least see grounds for changing his opinion.

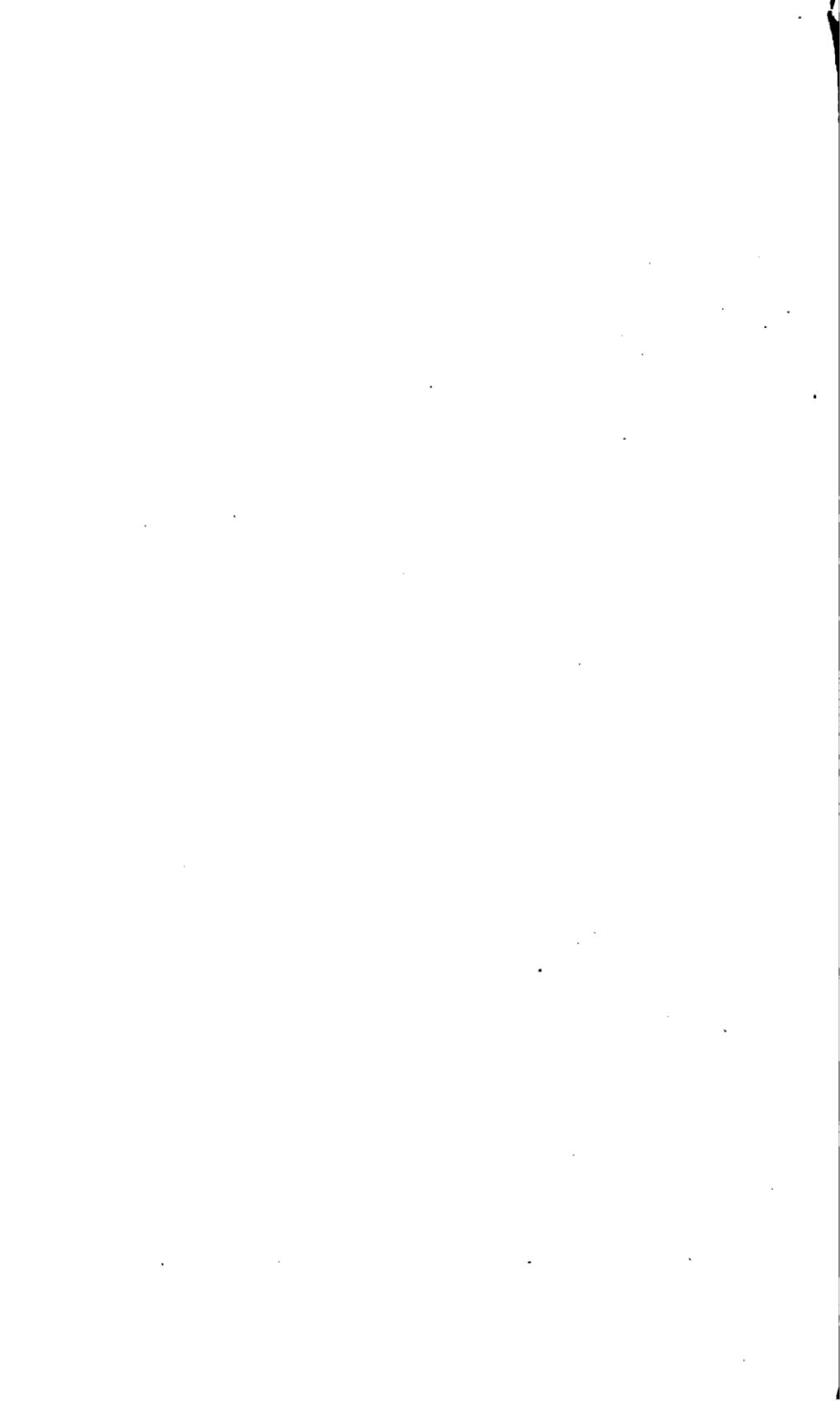
* The passage referred to by him as giving the story occurs in the Taittiriya-Samhitā and has been quoted by Dr. Macdonell himself at the foot of his translation. It is अष्टो वा इन्द्रं प्रत्यक्षं नापश्यन्; ते वसिष्ठः प्रन्यक्षम् अपश्यत्... तस्मै पतान्तु स्तोमभागात् अवशीत्.

The above instances are but a trifle of *pulākas** out of a very capacious *sthāli* indeed, filled to the very brim.

I regret very much to have been obliged to re-open an old sore and to cause a new one in one case. But Dr. Macdonell leaves me no option. He collects together all the stories he can get and uses them and a good deal that is purely imaginary, to traduce the whole class of native scholars and Sanskrit students with a parenthetical mention of rare exceptions and to run down the system of Sanskrit education in India; and glorifies European scholars and their work in the country, and extols the system of instruction in Europe; and the evident object is to make the Government of India bestow Sanskrit Professorships and Archæological Superintendencies on Europeans alone. It has thus become an inexorable duty, though a very very unpleasant one, to show up how incompetent these European Scholars are to teach natives of India their own literature and interpret the antiquities of the country. Of course it is far from my object to maintain that Europeans are not doing useful work or not stimulating the spirit of research among natives by their writings. But what I have to urge is that there are some essential points in which natives have a decided superiority over them and are consequently better fitted to teach the whole of the non-Mantra literature of India to their countrymen. The influence of Europeans is to be indirect and should be and can be exerted only by their writings; while on the other hand the work of Europeans will remain defective if not subjected to native criticisms. With an expression of extreme sorrow for my being obliged to bring in the name of a living scholar, whom

AN ADDENDUM.

At the end of para., p. 20, add: And who can now say that the correct reading, *stomabhāgān*, would not be found to be that of even some of his own nine MSS., if not all, were an accurate and critical scholar to examine them as J. Hertel examined those used by Dr. Haberlandt?







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